4: Du Tertre M-4 (no date) 1667 ST13 Callinago ST13
(ca. 1650)

Concerning the Natives of the Antilles

(From: Histoire generale des iles de S. Christophe, de la Guadeloupe, de la Martinique et autre dan l'Amerique.)

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CONCERNING THE NATIVES OF THE ANTILLES

The Origin of the Island Caribs

173 The Caribs are filled with all kinds of theories concerning their
773 origin and it is not a little difficult to get from them even the semblance of truth, because of the diversity of their stories. Among so many different opinions, however, they do hold one belief in common: they say they are descended from the Galibis, a people who dwell in South America and are their closest neighbors. They do not know the time nor the reason which impelled them to leave their native land and led them to expand into these rather remote islands. They only affirm that their first father, a man called Kalinago [Breton: Callinago], became restless among his nation and, wishing to conquer new lands, embarked with all his family. After having sailed for quite a long time he established himself in Dominica which is an island where Caribs live in fairly large numbers. Kalinago's children, losing the respect that they owed to their father, gave him a poisonous drink which caused his death. Yet it is said he changed his shape and became a hideous fish, which is called by them Atraioman and which lives even today in the river. Only the simplest people agree about this metamorphosis. The others consider it to be a complete delusion.

84 Since one cannot infer anything from this fable which would fully
173 satisfy us concerning their origin, the reader must content himself with what has been stated by the Reverend Father Raymond [Breton] in his dictionary. I don't think there is anyone in Europe at the present time who has a more certain knowledge than he does, for he has spent a good part of his life with these islanders, from whom he has learned everything which it is possible to know about them. Here are his own words:

173 "I have finally learned from the captains on the island of Dominica that the words Galibis and Carib were names that had been given to them by Europeans. Their true name was Callinago and they designated themselves only with the words: oubaóbanum and bolodébonum: that is to say, 'from the islands' and 'from the continent.' These island Caribs

173 were Galibis from the continent who branched off in order to conquer the islands. The captain who led them was small in size but great in courage. It is said that he ate little and drank even less. All the natives of the country
[m] were exterminated except for the women, who have always retained something of their own language, in order to keep alive the memory of these conquests. The captain then ordered them to carry the heads of his enemies to a place where the fathers could show them to their children and they successively to all their posterity. As a matter of fact these heads have been found by the French in the small caves formed in the rocks by the edge of the sea. They told me that they had once had kings and that the word abouyou was the name for those who carried them on their shoulders. Furthermore they said that the Caribs who had their carbet [men's house] at the foot of Soufrière on Dominica beyond d'Amichon were descended from these kings."

But this good Father did not take the trouble of asking when the Caribs had ceased to have kings, which would be a fact worth knowing.

174 One can add two or three things which clearly show that these peoples are descended from Galibis. First of all there is a common tradition which all of the Caribs believe; they affirm that the Galibis, their ancestors, came into these islands in centuries past in order to fight the Igneri, who were the natives in this country. The second thing which confirms it and about which we will talk elsewhere is the diversity of the language between men and women, which still persists today. They say that this diversity had its origin at the time of the conquest, because the Galibis killed all the males of these islands and only spared the wives and daughters to whom they gave husbands from the young men of their nation. Both groups have maintained their original language. To all of this evidence must be added the general resemblance of religion, of customs, and of language. Thus there can be no question or doubt as to whether they had their origin from the Galibis of the continent.

726 At the beginning of the occupation of Guadeloupe it was a common belief both among the Caribs and among the old French inhabitants that in addition to the Caribs who were the masters of the islands there

726 were still a few Igneri in the mountains who survived the Galibis massacre of the original inhabitants, and that occasionally these Igneri descended in stealth from the mountains and did much harm to the Galibis. But our hunters who at that time traveled all over the island had no knowledge of them.

In addition, it was said that a little time before the journey made by Father Raymond [Breton], these so-called Igneri had seized a young Negro slave woman and after they had skinned her they covered a tree with her skin. This inhuman cruelty aroused the Caribs to fury, and they gathered together and climbed up inaccessible rocks. They reached a house which they surrounded. The people inside consisted only of one man together with his wife and small child. After a weak attempt at resistance they were captured. The husband was roasted and eaten, and the woman and her child were enslaved. Five years later, Father Raymond [Breton] having returned to the area learned of a raid by the mountain people who had set fire to some houses belonging to their enemies. After loading themselves with booty they returned to their mountain settlement. This new eruption gave Father Raymond [Breton] a reason to question the Caribs. He asked whether they believed the people who made these raids were still true Igneri. They answered "no," that these mountain people were fugitive slaves called Allouagues whom they had captured in war. The captives, they said, fearing shameful servitude and afraid of being eaten, had taken to the woods and mountains where they increased in numbers because they had their wives with them.

[174] Relying on the accounts of Mr. de l'Olive, of Mr. de la Ramee, and of the oldest inhabitants of our islands, I emphasized the point in the first edition [1654 edition] of this history that some of the Caribs who lived in the islands before us were survivors of the Spanish massacres in the islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico. This is different from what Mr. de Rochefort would have us believe. Although it is quite difficult to tack against the wind with the native boats, nevertheless, it is not true that:

[502] "It is marvelous that the boats of the Caribs are able to tack against the wind and gain a league a day."

I myself have seen them make ten to twelve leagues per day in the face of contrary winds. Therefore the difficulty these fugitives would

have had in reaching our islands is not so great as Mr. de Rochefort would have us believe. In addition we have learned from the companions of Mr. Desnambuc that in the fights waged at St. Kitts in 1626 there were among the Caribs who perished there several of these miserable refugees who had fled to avoid the cruelty of the Spanish.

But Mr. de Rochefort in arguing against what I said in my first edition, but without quoting me, did not pay heed to the fact that he was falling into much greater error when stating that the Caribs descended from the Apalachites who lived six or seven hundred leagues beyond the islands occupied by the Spanish. The only reason for his statement is that the winds were favorable five or six hundred years ago, which is to say about three hundred years before the discovery of America. This is a very wild guess on his part.

Thus I am convinced that the only reason Mr. de Rochefort had for seeking so great a distance for the origin of the Caribs was to have a pretext for increasing his book with the history which Mr. Bristol has made of the Apalachites. In the same way Mr. d Rochefort has stated that a sea unicorn was washed ashore at Tortuga. This story belongs to the fancy of Davis and du Groenand. Mr. de Rochefort put this story into his book in order to use the history of these people made by the Dutch, and in this fashion he has mixed the north and the south, the heats of the Torrid Zone with the cold and ice of the extreme latitudes. As a matter of fact, although I was in the islands by the time this so-called unicorn was beached and although I was very curious to learn everything which happened in these islands, I never heard anything resembling this story. All of the inhabitants of that time whom I questioned told me that they had never heard about it, and I cannot conceive how the memory of such a considerable event would have remained obscure to them. I do not wish to say that this story is absolutely false or impossible.

Concerning the Religion of the Caribs

It is a very deplorable fact to see these poor people being born in paganism and spending their lives in darkness, for as St. Paul said: "filii irae sine Deo in hoc mundo."

After having lived without any knowledge of God, they die without hope of salvation. It would be better for us to say that they have no religion at all, instead of describing as a cult of divinity all their trifling nonsense, superstitions, or more exactly sacrileges with which they honor all of the demons who seduce them.

However they have some feeling of a God more powerful than all those we will discuss, and they agree with us that he made the sky and resides there. Mr. de Rochefort says they make the following distinction: that the God of France made the sky of France and that the God of the Islands made the sky of the islands. I have talked with several men who share my sentiment that the Caribs do not make this distinction. The Caribs admit freely that god is gifted with such great kindness that he harms no one. Instead of elevating themselves by this knowledge they are indifferent to it, rendering honor and presenting their offerings only to the spirits from whom they hope to gain favors or from whom they fear spells.

It is a general belief that there are two kinds of spirits. Some are good and are called icheiri. The others are bad and are called mapoya or maboya. They believe that among these spirits a difference of sex prevails and that they multiply. They had once been men like themselves and are of diverse nations. When these spirits are called by their boyes [shamans], they sometimes bring their children's children's children with them. They further believe that it is within the power of these spirits or gods to make their manioc increase, and that they can come to help them in their sickness and aid them in their battles. They cause hurricanes and in addition poison and kill whomever they please.

The Caribs have among them certain charlatans who are called boyes, but are called priests, sorcerers, or magicians by Mr. de Rochefort. Since he states that these boyes don't offer any sacrifice and it is the special duty of priests to offer them, it seems to me that he would have better called them ministers like himself.

Most of these boyes, and this is the way they call these sorcerers, are dedicated and consecrated from early youth to this detestable ministry by means of fasts as well as by bloodshed caused by cutting themselves over all the parts of their body with agouti teeth. When one of these boyes wishes to make another man a boye this is the

754 way he does it. After having fasted, the boye makes his god descend
787 into the large common house which is oval with rafters which extend to the ground. It has only one door and no window. At the end of the house there is a matoutou which is a small table made of rushes or of latanier [a kind of palm]. The table is square with a width of a foot to a foot and a half on a side, and has a height of eight to ten inches. On this table the ordinary offering is prepared, which is fresh cassava and ouicou [kind of beer] in new calabashes. The boye calls his god by ordinary ceremonies [such as] singing a song which has a dismal tune. After that he blows a little tobacco smoke and immediately he falls down in the middle of the house like a sack of corn. At this time he [the god] is presented with a cotton hammock which is hung especially for him. Next the offerings on the matoutou table are given to him and the boye begins his speech-making and requests a god for the man he has decided to give one to. This man [the candidate] has also purified himself by very rigorous fasts. This being done the god or devil gives him a god who appears in the shape of a man. But if the boye is a woman he gives her a goddess which appears in the shape of a woman. It is not said among them that there are gods of all the Caribs, but rather that there is a god of such a man or a goddess of such a woman.

As soon as this new boye is consecrated, his personal god tells him a fable in order that his mind may acquire value. Brother Charles, who was at Dominica with Father Raymond [Breton], told me that he had become acquainted with one of these boyes who said he had a god named Yris who was one of the naughtiest among all these false divinities. He once asked him [the boye] where he obtained such a god, and the man replied that his father had had two of them and had left him this one by inheritance and further that his father also had given a goddess to his wife. He added that his god once entered the body of a woman and had carried her several times over the sun without her being blinded by its rays. Here she had seen several beautiful lands bounded by rocks from which bubbled an infinity of very lovely springs. The god had promised her that after her death she would live in these places with him. It is in this fashion that the devil misleads these poor unfortunate people.

755 When they wish to know the outcome of some sickness they call upon a boye, and after having purified and cleaned up the house

735 they prepare a matoutou table in the middle with cassava and ottcou as we have stated previously. The boye comes at night, since he is a child of darkness and abhors light. He carefully extinguishes the fire in the house and does not allow any fire to burn in the surrounding area.

177 In this connection I cannot pass in silence an incident which happened to Father Raymond [Breton]. He was warned one time that they were going to make the devil enter a house which was near to his own. He decided to go there in order to compel the devil to flee and to rid the people of their false beliefs. He began to walk over with a burning brand in his hand (he had no torch or lamp because they don't use them). The women came out dismayed, and gathering in front of him mixed their speeches with abuse, telling him that he wished to ruin them all. Their god was already in a rage, they said, because he could only enjoy himself in the dark—that he abhorred light. The good Father courageously replied that he was not in the least frightened by the anger of this spirit and that the power of God, who was worshipped in pure truth, was stronger than all the artifices of a devil who cheated them. The women replied that if he advanced further he would provoke their husbands to mistreat him. He did all he could to advance and to rid them of such a strange superstition, but because he did not yet know the language too well, he was compelled to go back to his own house.

735 To return to the narrative, after the boye has come to the house at night he begins his seance among those who have called upon him. He performs the ceremonies we have mentioned and the god or the devil of medicine falls from above in the midst of the house, snapping his fingers in the same way as our barbers do when they shake the water off their hands after having washed a beard. This devil of medicine answers in a clear and distinct voice all questions which are asked of him. If the sick person is to die, it is stated that this will happen and no aid is given to him, everyone abandoning him as if he were already dead. If, on the contrary, it is said he will recover, the master and the valet, in other words the boye and the false god, get near the sick person and feel and press him, handling several times the afflicted part, blowing on it meanwhile. Sometimes they draw out of it, or pretend to draw out of it, thorns of palma Cristi as long as fingers, small bones, snake fangs, and splinters of wood, persuading the sick person that these things were the cause of his pains.

755 Often they suck the sick part and go immediately outside the house to vomit what they call the venom. In this way the poor sick person is healed more by imagination than he is in fact, and he is more bewitched than disillusioned. When this ceremony is entirely over, the devil of medicine stirs up all the food prepared for him and appears to be feasting although everything remains uneaten, as we have explained. Roughly kicking the ground he finally takes his leave shaking his hands and mapping his fingers.

776 It sometimes happens that a person summons several boyes, and
755 each of them causes his own god to appear. This is worse than the revelry of Chaumont, for these devils wrangle among themselves insulting each other a thousand times; according to the Caribs, they even come to blows among themselves. When this happen these poor barbarians become pale and are compelled to run away for fear of being involved and becoming subjected to very strong blows.

755 When the sickness is healed the cured man makes a banquet for the ichéiri or false god and the boye does not fail to be there. At the end of the banquet both of them blacken the cured man with Genipa apples and he becomes as beautiful as his medicine, that is to say as black as the devil.

776 A young French boy who lived among them as a slave for three or four years asked a boye one day to describe the appearance of his god. The boye answered him that he was so old, he was all bent and that his walking stick had become glistening under the weight of supporting
787 him. The devils sometimes lodge themselves in the bones of the dead, which are taken from a grave and wrapped in cotton. Oracles are rendered from these bones when the devil is questioned, and it is said that it is the very soul of the dead who speaks. These talking
754 bones are used to bewitch anyone who has angered them. This is the way they do it. They take the remains of the food or drink of the enemy, or any other personal belonging. When they have encircled the object with these bones the enemy immediately begins to lose his ordinary vigor, a consuming fever ruins him, and as the spell runs its course the man dies a lingering death. No one can give such a man a remedy for the recovery of his health.

754 Father Raymond [Breton] has seen a man who wished to take
627 vengeance for the murder of his brother. He made a mistake and

killed an innocent man instead of the man who was guilty. The relatives of the innocent man who had been so unfortunately murdered decided to take revenge, without considering that his death was caused by mistake rather than through malice. They reddened cotton with blood from the man who had been murdered and placed it with human bones. It was immediately seen that the murderer began to lose his healthy appearance. After a gradual decline in health and wasting away over a span of two years, he died just as he was planning to come to Guadaloupe and receive baptism from Father Raymond [Breton] who was staying there at that time.

The Caribs have ugly little dolls of cotton, and it is said that the devil speaks to them through the doll's mouth. They throw them into the sea when they plan to take a sea journey and if they sink to the bottom it is a sign of storm and of risk. If they float on the water it is taken as certain prediction of fine weather.

Mr. du Parquet, Lieutenant General for His Majesty in Martinique, assured me that the Caribs of the island had found in the caverns certain idols made of cotton and shaped like men. They had small grains of sea savonet in place of eyes and wore a kind of cotton cap on their heads. The Caribs affirmed that these were the gods belonging to the Igneri whom they had massacred. But no Carib dared to enter that cavern, and they trembled with fear when they approached it.

Mr. du Parquet having heard about it sent some of his people with the order to take these idols out and bring them to his house. The Caribs found out about the plan and were so terrified that they told their fears to the French who became uneasy, [with the result that] the first two to step into this cavern passed out in a faint. They were carried out half dead and the others dared go no farther. A little later braver people were sent who had not talked to the Caribs, and they entered the cave and secretly removed the idols.

These idols were the cause of a strange adventure which happened to a captain from St. Malo. Mr. du Parquet put the idols into a wooden box and gave them to this captain, without telling him what it was. He gave him [the captain] the order to send the box to the late Duke of Orleans with letters which he also gave him for this Prince. This poor captain, having been unlucky enough to be captured by a frigate out of San Sebastián, was taken to Spain. The

778 idols were discovered in his possession and he was given over to the Inquisition. He would have inevitably experienced the rigors due a sorcerer had not the letters written to His Royal Highness by Mr. du Parquet clearly pointed out his innocence.

They also make certain small wooden statues said to be figures of maboyas, who reveal themselves to the Caribs by tormenting them. They wear them suspended around their neck. They wear them to halt, or at least diminish, the outrages of these cruel tyrants, rather than from a desire to serve the maboyas in a cult. Actually all the duties which are demanded by the ichéiris as well as by the maboyas through their boyes seem to be striking imitations of what happens when witches revel on their Sabbath, rather than acts of true religion. Father Raymond [Breton] states in his dictionary that they blame all of the evils which happen to them on the gods of the boyes, on the maboyas, and on the sorcerers. They fear the first more than they love them. They hate the second, and they very often take revenge on the third, often times for very little reason.

535 [321] When there is an eclipse of the moon they believe that a maboya is eating it. This causes them to dance all night, the young and old alike, men and women, hopping with their feet together, one hand on their head and the other on their buttocks. They dance without singing but intermittently they howl certain dismal and appealing screams into the air. Once they have started to dance they are obliged to continue until dawn without daring to stop the dance no matter what the necessity may be. While dancing, a girl takes in her hand [324] a calabash filled with small pebbles, and shaking it she tries to fit her coarse voice in with this uproar. This dance is different from those which they do when they get drunk, because the one reflects superstition and the other rejoicing.

785 It is also necessary to include among superstitions the fast which they observe for a variety of reasons. For example, they fast when a girl has reached the age of puberty, or a boy enters adolescence, or when children have lost their father or mother, or when a husband has lost his wife or a wife a husband, or when they have killed some of their enemies in war. However, the most solemn of their fasts is undertaken by newly married couples who have a boy for a first child. They sometimes spend five or six days without eating or drinking.

785 while others more robust satisfy themselves for nine or ten days with a bit of bread and water. If they did not hold to this rigorous abstinence they would be considered weaklings. They are also superstitious in their avoidance of salt, pig meat, tortoises, manatees, fat, eggs and a large number of animals which would have been considered unclean according to the law of Moses. They also have a custom of marrying female first cousins; cousins of the sons of two brothers call themselves brothers. They have no names and they ordinarily call a man the son of so and so, as the Jews are accustomed to do. This has given rise to the opinion that they were descended from Jews, but no reasons are provided by them which might indicate that they practice all of these customs for religious reasons, so that it is not worth while to infer any consequences from this fact.

They believe in the immortality of the soul, but say that each man has three souls; one in the heart, one in the head, and another in the arm. The soul in the heart manifests itself by its throbbing and goes straight to heaven upon death to be very happy there. The souls in the arm and head manifest themselves by the beating of the pulse and throb of the arteries. They become maboyas, that is to say, evil spirits, which they believe to be the cause of everything sinister and disastrous.

Concerning Birth, Education and Marriage, of the Caribs

Since nature was corrupted by the wickedness of our first parents, it has been absolutely necessary to have laws to enlighten reason and to direct it without error to the correct path of truth. It should not astonish us if the birth, life, and customs of our unenlightened Caribs are filled with superstition, errors, and nonsense which brings amusement at the same time that it brings tears to the eyes of those who have true Christian sentiments.

Among their nonsense which upset me the most was a superstition practised by men at the birth of their children. Women give birth with little pain, and if labor is difficult for some of them they know how to relieve it using a special root as a remedy and which has an

admirable effect for this purpose. I have talked about it in the section on plants, chapter one, paragraph four. The women do not have the trouble which is so fashionable among the women of Europe, for the baby is no sooner born than it is washed and put into a small cotton hammock. The woman then takes up her housework as if nothing had happened. Rather it is as if the birth pangs had passed from the woman to her husband, for he begins to complain. Everyone consoles him and a hammock is hung inside from the roof of the house for him and he is visited as if he were sick. He is put on a diet which would cure gout and the great pox of the stoutest men of France. For myself I am astonished at how they can fast so long without dying, for they sometimes spend the first five days without drinking or eating anything. Afterwards, up to the tenth day they drink ouicou, which provides about the same nourishment as beer. When these ten days are over they start to eat cassava and they drink ouicou, but they abstain from everything else for an entire month. During this time they only eat the inside of the cassava so that the remainder resembles the edge of a shapeless hat. They keep the crusts which they hang from a string in the house and this cassava is saved for the day of the banquet, which takes place at the end of forty days.

After the forty days have passed they invite their relatives and best friends. Upon their arrival but before they start to eat, they gash the skin of the poor unfortunate man with agouti teeth and draw blood from every part of his body, so that with a man who is sick only in imagination they oftentimes cause a genuine sickness. But if I may use this metaphor it is now necessary to add sauce to the fish. This is to say they take sixty to eighty big grains of pimento or India pepper, the strongest that they are able to find, and after having mashed it thoroughly in water they take this spiced water and wash the wounds and scabs. I believe the poor man suffers no less than if he had been burned alive. However, he is not supposed to utter a single word, for if he did it would be considered cowardly and shameful. When this ceremony is over he is brought back to his hammock where he continues to stay for several days. The others go and have a good dinner and enjoy themselves in the carbet at his expense. But this is not all, for over the space of six full months he does not eat any birds or fish, firmly believing that this would harm the

stomach of the child and that it would inherit the natural weaknesses of the animals which the father had eaten. For example, if the father ate tortoise the child would be deaf and would have no more brains than this animal and if he ate manatee the child's eyes would resemble those of this animal i.e., small and round. There are many similar examples of the same thing.

Finally, during all of this time they have absolutely no intercourse with their wives. Brutality, weakness, and unbridled lust, typical of the greater part of our Christians, is sufficiently restrained by these barbarians who have neither faith nor religion. In addition, as soon as their wives conceive they have no further intercourse.

The women also fast during the time after the birth of their child, but not so rigorously as their husbands. They prepare themselves by this means and take great care to flatten the foreheads of their babies while the bone is still pliable. They push in the nose to make it flat. However, many of them may be found who have aquiline noses which look just like the noses of the French.

Eight days after the six month period the father invites one of his most intimate friends to be the godfather of his son, or if the child is a girl, the friend is called a godmother. They have a small banquet and then cut a little hair from the head of the child. They pierce the ear lobe and also the septum of the nose and they pass two or three threads of cotton through the hole to make certain that the wound will not mend itself. Next they pierce the lower lip. If they think that the child is too weak to stand this pain they postpone the piercing and content themselves with cutting its hair. This being done they give the child the name which will be his for life [but] which does not prevent the taking of other names. But that name will be with him always and in recognition of the fact the father and mother of the child anoint the neck and head of the godfather or godmother with oil of palmetto.

It is astonishing to see how few Carib children are deformed considering the fact that their mothers never swaddle them; in this respect the Carib women would be able to mock at our French women who pamper their children. When the children have gained strength through their mother's milk they are then given some sweet potatoes or bananas which are first chewed by the mothers and then put into the mouths of their babies.

the mouths of their babies. Reaching the age of three or four months they crawl on hands and feet all over the house just like small dogs. They wallow in the dust and roll unceasingly on the soil and they accustom themselves so well on all fours that when they are adults they run as fast in this way as the French do upright. When their strength allows it they /infants/ stand up, falling more often then they walk. It is amazing to see them continually falling on their hands or on their behinds.

They all eat earth, the mother as well as the children. The cause of such an irregular appetite can be explained to my satisfaction only by an excess of melancholy, which is the predominate humor among all Caribs. This is so true that they find as much delight and satisfaction in eating chalk as they do in eating sugar.

The mothers tenderly love their children and are always on guard to ward off anything harmful which might happen to them. They almost always hold them suspended at the breast. When they go to sleep at night in their awkward hammocks it is amazing that they never smother their children, for they often go to bed completely drunk and out of their mind. They /mothers/ are rarely separated from their children and in all trips by sea or land they carry them under their arm in a small cotton hammock which is slung from their shoulder in order that they will always have in front of their eyes the object of their care.

If it happens that the husband leaves his wife, she keeps all of the children and she never gives any of them to him unless she is compelled by force to do so. Children who have been abandoned by their father help their mother and provide subsistence. When the children are older, if they are boys they follow the father and eat with him. If they are girls they follow the mother and eat with her. All of the children, boys as well as girls, are raised by their mothers and fathers more as if they were beasts than as rational beings. They do not teach them to be either civil or honorable. They do not even learn to say good morning, or good evening, nor to thank people for small favors. As a result of this training they don't honor their parents either in words or in respectful attitudes. If they obey their parents' commands this comes more from whim than from the respect which they bear them. This wildness of behavior continues among the children, since

they are seldom corrected even if they mistreat their fathers and mothers; most of them are not even reprimanded for such terrible conduct.

Nakedness does not shame them [the children], and they belch, fart, and carry on all the other necessities of nature without any restraint. Their fathers and mothers do not teach them anything except how to fish, to shoot with a bow, to swim, and to weave small baskets and cotton hammocks.

When the boys and girls have reached the age of puberty they fast for three weeks or one month and their skin is cut with agouti teeth as we mentioned previously. When the Carjbs want to make one of their young men a captain or raise him to the rank of warrior, the young man obtains in advance a bird of prey called Mancefenil, [Manséfenil] which he feeds until the time it is destined for this ceremony. When this day arrives the father invites the most distinguished and oldest of his friends, and when they come together he has his son sit on a stool and encourages him to be courageous in his battles and to revenge himself on his enemies. He then takes the bird by the feet and breaks and crushes its head by striking it against the head of his son. Although he is almost stunned by the blows he has received, the son must not even raise his eyebrows if he wishes to be considered a brave warrior. Then the father mangles and crushes the body of the bird and soaks it in water with a quantity of pimentos. He cuts the skin of his son all over the body and washes him with this spiced water and finally gives him the heart of the Mancefenil bird to eat. This is done, they say, so that he will become more coutageous.

Afterwards a cotton hammock is hung for him from the roof of the house and he is laid stretched out in it. He is to stay there without eating or drinking or moving in any way until his strength is almost gone. They firmly believe that if he should twist himself during this time he would remain in this position for the rest of his life. When the son has passed this test, which is so rigorous that occasionally one of them dies, he passes as a valorous soldier, even though he may very often be only a coward.

It should be noticed in speaking of their marriages that the young people do not know what it is to make love before they are married. When they wish to marry a girl who does not belong to them by right

584 —the female first cousin descending from the female line does belong to them—they ask her father for her, for they seldom marry against
582 the will of their parents. They have no degree of consanguinity forbidden among them, and it has happened that fathers marry their own daughters from whom they have children, and mothers marry their sons, although this is a very rare thing. It is quite common to see a
[595] case where two sisters have married the same man, and sometimes a
584 man marries a mother and her daughter. If a girl marries a captain or the son of a captain she is led to her husband by her father and her mother, and she carries her husband's dinner to him. The two of them eat it together, sitting on the ground in the center of the house without any other celebration, except perhaps for a little drinking party, that is to say a little debauchery between the parents, although this
591 is quite rare. The woman then lives with her husband. When a man who is not a captain marries a girl, he goes from his own place of residence as we have said, and lives in the house of his father-in-law.
604 In this situation the women have the advantage over their husbands, for they may speak to all kinds of people while the husband does not dare to speak to the parents of his wife, unless this restriction is dispensed with either by their age or by their drunkeness. They avoid meeting each other by making devious paths. If they are surprised in a place where they cannot take back what they have said, the one spoken to turns his head to one side in order to avoid looking at the man who speaks, if he must hear him. This strange custom was reported to me by a young man who had been a slave among them for
592 a long time. Husbands and wives change their names when they are married.

595 Polygamy is common among them and almost all of them have several wives and sometimes even six or seven. They even have wives in different islands where they are accustomed to go. It is chiefly the captain who boasts of having a large family in order to gain more credit among his people and to render himself more formidable to his enemies. A Carib who has several wives builds a small house for each of them. The husband visits them there so that
[605] for one month—they count by moons—he lives with one wife, and another month with another. Concerning this point it appears that there is no kind of jealousy among them. Women of Europe, call it a miracle if you wish!

545 The wife who is living with her husband during this month is obliged to prepare for him all the necessities. She makes bread for him and serves him as her master, painting him red and combing his hair every day. If he needs to travel she accompanies him everywhere during his trip. Since the love for their wives is unequal, the visits are sometimes not so evenly regulated. The husbands let whole years elapse without living with some of their wives. But if the wife is the daughter of a captain, he is interested in his child and threatens his son-in-law that he will take back his daughter and give her to some-
[69] one else. If the wife is deceived and seduced by the wiles and promise of a lover and if her sin, done secretly, is discovered by her husband, he sometimes forgives his wife but never the wife's lover.
546 They like to be as free to abandon their wives as they are to chose them, and this is the reason why they leave them whenever they please. The wives do not have the same right and need their husbands'
547 consent. If a man marries a slave he has captured in war, she is in-
567 cluded among his wives, but she always has her hair cut like that of a boy. Often when they have taken their pleasure they strike their captured women with a boutou—which is a kind of club and is their ordinary weapon—and by hitting them on the head send them to the next world as their only reward. Nevertheless, this is rather rare and we have seen several of them, especially old men, who tenderly loved their young slaves and the children of such, who enjoyed the same condition as the man's other children.

546 There is no doubt at all that the female animals in our islands have a shorter gestation period than in Europe. I have neither noticed nor heard that women are affected in this way. However, the women are capable of having children earlier and they stop bearing children later than European women. If one looks into the register of Guadeloupe he will find the name of an old Carib woman called Madame, who is one hundred years old, and she has a daughter who is five years old. I have seen the woman and child. Her age is only conjectural, yet it is certain that she could not have been less than eighty years old when she gave birth to the child.

The Reverend Jesuit Father Chemel let me know several facts in letters which he did me the honor of writing, and which prove what now follows: He told me that at the time he lived in the islands a

oung French boy, a servant of Mr. de la Vallee, having abused an ld Carib woman who was 80 years old, made her pregnant. It should e added that according to the opinion of the inhabitants who first ived in the islands she was more than 100 years old. This was con- irmed by the age of the children who were themselves very old. In he island of Martinique the same boy married a 55 year old French oman who became pregnant frequently and had several children, lthough she has now been barren for the last 15 years.

4. Occupations

None of the occupations of the Carib men require difficult labor, ut are rather a necessity without which even the sweetest life is un- earable. They spend their whole life in such complete idleness hat when one sees them put a hand to work one might think that it is onotony and annoyance which they find in laziness that makes them ork, rather than reasonable compulsion. As soon as they get up they un to the river, wash themselves completely, and then light a big ire in their carbet, and sit around it to get warm. Everyone tells hat he knows, some converse with friends, and others play the lute, so that they are moving either their tongues or their fingers. eanwhile women prepare the food. After this meal some go fishing, hich they do in several ways.

They shoot fish with arrows and dive down immediately into the ater to get them. Others, when they see a lobster, which is a big rayfish of the sea, take a big stone in both hands and dive headlong nto the water. Leaving the stone at the bottom they bring up the obster. They harpoon tortoises, but usually they fish for them with ook and line as we do. They catch big fish with lines made of loes fiber, using big hooks. Small fish are caught on little tin hooks ithout barbs. They also use birds such as kingfishers and pelicans, hich they tame while young, to go fishing for them. They use these irds as we use cormorants. Fairly often they stun fish in rivers with ertain crushed herbs which have been soaked. They catch these tunned fish by hand, and indeed, these are just as good as those aught by hook and line.

512 Other men go to their houses in order to chop wood, or spend their
462 time at some small task which they consider necessary. Some em-
[415] ploy themselves by making ibichets. These are little sifters, round or square, with such small holes that they use them to sift their flour and ouicou. They make them from the first barbs of a plant which the Caribs of Dominica call ouallouman and which I have described under the name of solaman because I have heard it named by others in this way.

Still other men are seen making lines to fish in the open sea, others make cotton belts, while the laziest men of all cut off their beard with a knife or pluck it out, hair by hair. Some make boutou clubs, bows, arrows, or catolis which are a kind of carrying basket used by the women. The more industrious work on canoes and pirogues and often spend several full years making one.

241 When they go to clear the forest for the habitation of a neighbor,
462 it takes about two or three hours to do, if they feel like working. They knock down the trees in a hundred foot square, the wood lying in confusion on the ground. They then go drinking, and get drunk
[461] for the rest of the day and sometimes the whole night. Concerning all of these tasks, they work an hour a day, and even then so slackly that they seem to be mocking their job.

They consume the rest of the time being painted and combed by their wives, playing the flute, and having daydreams.

883 All this which has just been described is the work of men. However, all the youths continually practice drawing the bow and become so expert that they can shoot flying birds. They sometimes wrestle,
[527] but in a very different way from the French, for they grab each other by the forearm and give each other such shakes that Father Raymond [Breton] states he saw a man who, having been thrown on the ground, remained there more than a quarter of an hour before he became fully conscious.

562 Whatever may be said about the Indies being the paradise for
512 women, this is true only for our French women, as we shall describe in its place. Concerning the Carib wives, they are more exactly
[461] slaves of their husbands, rather than companions, for they are never
462 idle. As soon as they get up they go to bathe, and then prepare their
512 husbands' soup which is made with some boiled bananas. After the husband has been served a full plate, and he is through with it, they

462 begin to comb and arrange his hair and paint him with urucu [body
512 paint]. This being done, they make bread for the next meal—for they make fresh bread every day. Then they cook what their husbands and children have brought from hunting and fishing. They serve it to them with cassava when it is cooked. But it is not true, as Mr. de Rochefort assumes, that the women were obliged to get venison, or had to fish [in streams] far off in the woods or at the edge of the sea.

After this they go to cultivate their gardens and plow their lands with a big pointed stick which is like a boar spear. They don't use this stick in any way like a hoe. The women also concern themselves with the planting of provisions, cultivating them, uprooting manioc, grating manioc, pressing and sifting it, and cooking cassava out of it. They also make ouicou for their social gatherings. In addition to all of this, they bear the brunt of the care and feeding of their children. Those who remain at home busy themselves by making cotton hammocks and this takes them as much time as it takes their husbands to make pirogues. They are also very busy pressing the hulls of covaheu [Breton: couáheu] and palmetto in order to get oil for the head and hair of their husbands. It is necessary to observe that it would be unthinkable for a man to be seen aiding his wife in any way.

[278] The obligations which the women have in caring for the sick and binding the wounded have given them a marvelous knowledge of herbs, which they use to treat a large number of ailments.

5. Commerce

437 No kind of trade exists among the Caribs, neither buying nor selling, for they give each other very liberally all the things with which they can aid their fellowmen, provided they do not inconvenience themselves too much. No nation has ever been more in need of the manufactures which industry has made common in all the nations of Europe. Before European contact, when the Caribs
439 wished to cut down trees to make a house, they had nothing to use but stone axes. If they wished to fish they could use only hooks of caret turtle shell. If they planned to build a pirogue in order to go to war against their foes, they endured all the trouble imaginable

[59] to cut down a tree, to hew it hollow, and give it the shape of a pirogue.

Nevertheless they do not feel secure when they trade with European vessels because some of them have been kidnaped, enslaved, or killed. The ones who do them the most harm are the English, against whom the Caribs are at war, because the English have established themselves in some of their islands where the Caribs wish to return. They have fought the English several times and the Caribs have always put them at a disadvantage. To get revenge they [the English] always change their flag when they sail past Dominica so that they will not be recognized and can thus lure the poor unfortunates by this strategem into their ships. The English then sell them as the most expensive item of their slave trade.

The Caribs wish the French would have the attitude that Caribs have among themselves. That is to say that the French should give generously everything which is asked of them. Since the French have a quantity of good-quality wares and stick more to their own business than the Caribs do, they cannot appreciate this way of doing things. But I am afraid that in time to come our French will cause them to abandon this praiseworthy custom and they will get into [the habit of] trade. This is what they have already started because we don't give them anything unless we receive with one hand and give with the other. After all, they are so poor and miserable that most of them carry all their belongings with them. When they come to visit us it is because they need our goods such as axes, bill-hooks, knives, needles, pins, hooks, cloth to make sails for their pirogues, glass, small mirrors, glass beads, and other small trinkets which are of small value.

They bring us in exchange cotton hammocks, tortoises, pigs, lizards, fish, fowls, parrots, local fruit, bows and arrows, small baskets, and caret turtle shell which is the best item and has the greatest value. They also bring us all they can plunder from their enemies if they have no further use for it. They also bring some green stones. They refrain from bringing what they need for themselves. If they need a knife and if you should offer them two axes or two billhooks which are worth twenty times more than a tortoise, they will not make the exchange. They will take the knife because

439 they need it and this is the most necessary item they have, for they cut and hew perpetually. You can get their goods cheaply and some of the French have made a fine profit out of it. A tortoise, even the biggest, is worth a billhook or an axe. A big choice pig is not worth more. But the profit is greatest when dealing with cotton hammocks and caret turtle shell. As our French are shrewder than the Caribs, they easily deceive them. The traders never bargain for a hammock in the evening since these good people will then have it present in their minds that they have an approaching need for it, and they would not give up their beds at any price. But in the morning they give them up cheaply without a thought that when night comes they will need them as much as before. At the end of the day they always return in order to exchange their purchase, simply saying that they cannot sleep on the ground. When they see that the traders do not intend to return them, the Caribs almost weep in vexation. They themselves are very subject to retract in all the bargains they make, and this is the reason why it is necessary to remove and hide everything which has been bought from them. In a word, all their commerce and trade is a childish game, and often when they come among us they cost more to feed than the profits that one has made out of the goods bought from them. They are very tiresome in asking for what they desire. However, whether it is because of shame or pride, they never request an article which has been once denied them.

6. Feasts

276 The Caribs hold certain assemblies which they call <u>oficou</u>, after
736 the name of the drink. Since contact with the French they are called <u>vins</u>. These assemblies are rejoicings held in common and during the course of them men, women, and children get as drunk as pigs. <u>Oficou</u> is drunk in excess without eating anything. In these debauches they remember past insults and get angry; anger turns to fury, and fury breaks out into horrible vengeance. There are many different reasons for holding an assembly. They hold assemblies when war is planned, when men slash themselves all over with agouti teeth after their wives give birth, when their children have their hair cut for the

276 first time, and when fathers make their sons warriors or when they
736 include them among those capable of going to war. They also hold drinking parties when they want to put a canoe to sea after it is newly built in the mountains. They call in all their neighbors who work for several hours and drink for the rest of the day. They also call in help to clear a new garden or when they make a new house. All their vins, ouicou, or debauches are accompanied by ribaldry. Some play
[538] the flute, others sing, and they make a kind of music which according to their tastes is sweet. The old women who never sing unless
[521] they are drunk, sing the bass notes with hoarse voices. The young people sing the higher notes with a piercing noise. There is a girl who holds a calabash full of small stones. She shakes it in accompaniment to the music of the others.

276 736 538 During the time that these living violins are humming, three or four of the most clever among them have themselves rubbed all over their body with a resinous, sticky water. They cover themselves with
[202] feathers and masquerade among the entire assembly taking a thousand postures and dancing in such a barbarous way that it is annoying rather than entertaining. One man holds his right arm extended over the shoulders of another. He in return, has his left arm around the neck of his companion. All the others follow them in pairs in the same way, dancing around the carbet. The whole assembly laughs in amusement at this buffoonery. It continues until the women bring
276 736 each of the dancers a calabash of ouicou, which is as much as two quarts as measured in Paris. No matter how drunk they are it is necessary to empty the calabash even if it kills them. If someone can no longer drink he is seized by one of the strongest among the company who embraces him from behind. The strong Carib so forcibly squeezes the other man's belly by this embrace that he is emptied of his excess through both mouth and bottom. Thus he is compelled to finish the calabash. Afterwards he starts to dance again.

Strange as it may seem, the master of the carbet who has invited everyone does not participate in the debauchery. It seems that he should never mingle with the group. He stands upright in front of the door resting his club on his shoulder as if he were a sentry, to prevent any brawl that might break out.

[195] The Caribs do not believe that drunkeness is a crime, but consider it only a diversion. One sees the women drinking to excess just like

277 the men. However it is considered by them to be a terrible crime to
278 take advantage sexually of a woman who is drunk. The women also
279 dance in a circle, each holding one hand on her head and the other on her buttocks, and neither jumping nor walking, they shake their feet. Although they exert themselves strenuously they actually traverse very little ground.

277 They have only one kind of feast which is respectable and decent. When a Carib has captured a tortoise or has made some other good catch, he invites one of his closest neighbors and gives him a good party. After eating well, the neighbor returns home very contented.

Despite the disorders of their debauches, they have at least the decency of never eating until they have invited all those who are in their company to do so. After sharing the meat it sometimes happens that there is nothing left for the man who gives the party. Because this [sharing] is their custom they often became angry at Father Raymond [Breton] who refused his share for fear he would be too much of a burden.

These assemblies are very frequent, and in Dominica there is one almost every week.

7. Food and Treatment of Visitors

264 There is nothing cruder among the Caribs than their eating habits; they are so dirty in everything connected with eating and drinking that it turns the stomach of everyone who sees them prepare it. I don't mention their ollicou and ordinary drink which is made by the gossiping old women chewing cassava, and whose mouths often stink like latrines. While eating they are not ashamed to belch, piss, and I dare not say more. They are not at all surprised to see in their food hair, straw, leaves, caterpillars, and all kinds of other filth. They have nothing good and clean except bread, which is cassava. They add pimento so strongly to everything they eat that they are the only people who can eat it.

262 As concerns the meats usually eaten, they do not correspond to the ones we are accustomed to in Europe. They only eat bourgaux [bugaus] which is a shellfish, crabs, tortoises, and several kinds of

262 fish both from rivers and from the sea. They never eat meat soup or other meat except a few birds which they throw into the fire without removing the feathers or entrails. When the feathers are almost singed off they take the birds out of the fire and smoke them and eat them. They don't eat milk, cheese, or butter and they hold eggs and oil in horror. This is said among them.

262 When they eat with us they are accustomed to eating our foods,
263 although there are some who are more scrupulous than the rest and don't wish to break their ancient customs. They don't use salt to season their food, and if they find grease they throw it out. They have only one common sauce made with fishheads and a large quantity of pimentos to which they add manioc water which loses its poison when it is boiled. They also add to the sauce mouchache which is obtained from manioc and is like the finest flour. They boil this attractive mixture. They dip their bread into it with much satisfaction and enjoyment, preferring it to the most exquisite meats.

264 Ordinarily they eat three times a day, but most of the time there is no rule for their meal and they eat when they are hungry and whenever they feel like it. The men eat separately in the great carbet. The women and small children eat in the small houses. They rest on their buttocks like monkeys sitting around a coui, which is half a calabash used like a dish, from which they eat all their food. Usually dogs and cats participate, but the children are careful to rap them on the muzzle with a stick when they rush in too quickly to the dish.

574 Among the Caribs there is always a deputy to welcome and take care of guests. When one of their friends comes to visit, this master of ceremonies brings him into the carbet and promptly hangs a hammock for him on which he tells him to sit. The guest does so immediately, maintaining his gravity and silence. Meanwhile everyone goes to some trouble to bring something to the newcomer. One woman brings him a drink, another bread, another crabs and fish or bourgaux [a kind of shellfish] and others bring similar things. When a guest is presented folded cassava it means he should eat only what is necessary for him. When it is presented to him unfolded it means that he should eat as much as he wishes and take the rest home with him. After eating and drinking well he says to his host "I am drunk." The master of ceremonies then brings everyone into the

577 carbet to welcome him. They greet him successively with the single word "haleatibou," which means 'welcome.' After this greeting he talks with everyone present and shares the food and drink left over from his meal with them. Then he says goodbye to everyone. They observe this politeness with everyone who visits them while taking a trip. If it is an old man or one well thought of, the women in addition paint him with urucu and grease his head with palmetto oil.

8. Ornaments

302 It is necessary to modify slightly my statement in the first paragraph of this book to the effect that the Caribs don't wear any clothes except the cover given them by nature. Actually they put on a beautiful scarlet suit every day which covers them as completely as their skin. However it does not prevent them from being seen naked. This scarlet garment is a kind of paint they call urucu which is blended with oil and dries up like the oil from flax or nuts. The women may paint the men every day, or when they go to public assemblies. They are always painted before undertaking a journey. The women give them, instead of a white shirt, a close fitting coat of this paint extending from the bottom of the feet to the top of the head. Several make this color more beautiful by adding black paint in the form of long twisted mustaches and circles around their eyes. Sometimes they paint black stripes all over their body. In this way they become as ugly and horrible in fact, as they are beautiful in their own belief.

Our missionaries who wear white habits profit little by wearing a new one among them. These often catch bits of Carib paint which is everywhere because the Caribs leave their mark every place they rub themselves or sit. Concerning this, I recall a Carib captain, newly painted, who had once been rather harshly scolded by Mrs. Aubert, the wife of the governor of this island. He had sat on her bed which was covered with white fustian cloth, and he had left a good part of his leg paint on it. Mr. Aubert invited this Carib to sit at the table for dinner a short time later. This Carib hesitated because he would certainly redden the bench where he should sit. Upon seeing his plate which would be a kind of small stool if it had three legs,

302 he imagined it had been put there to sit upon. For this reason he took it from the table and put it on the bench. Then he sat on it. Realizing that everyone was laughing about it, he became angry and made us understand, indirectly, that he did not know how to behave among the French and would never return to visit us again.

This paint, although light, is useful, for it protects from sunburn and from brine which dries up and burns the skin, and warms them in the cold of the night. The chief benefit is the protection it offers against the mosquitos.

They don't wear a beard but rather pluck it hair by hair with the point of a knife, as I have said. If there is some left they shave it [303] with a gras which cuts like a razor. They all wear long hair like the women of Europe, and let a part of it hang on their forehead. It is cut like that of small girls. They also have strands of hair hanging past their temples. The rest of it is drawn to the back, combed, and adjusted neatly with a cotton string. At the end of this string are [fastened] either small tufts, thimbles, crystal, small white ornaments, or similar trinkets. In this truss of hair they stick feathers of all colors and sometimes make crowns around their heads with them.

304 All of the Caribs have their ears, lower lip, and septum of the 304 nose pierced. They pass long parrot feathers through the nose, which take the place of mustaches. They sometimes suspend from these feathers, small strips of brass as large as a fingernail. They pass hooks through their ear holes and through the holes in their lower lip. They wear long necklaces which hang to their stomachs. These necklaces are usually made with the teeth of agouti, cats, or leopards, and are very neatly strung on cotton cord. They also wear a whistle hung from the neck, made from the bone of an enemy.

305 The ornaments they prize the most are the caracolis or coulloucoli, 437 small strips of a low quality gold metal. It [the metal] has the quality of neither corroding nor tarnishing and this is the reason why the Caribs prize it so highly. Only the captains or their children wear them. It has been thought that these caracolis come from the islands of Hispaniola, otherwise called Santo Domingo. However, the Caribs assert the contrary and say they get them in trade from their enemies whom they call Allouagues. By means of certain agreements which the Caribs have with members of that nation, the caracolis are obtained

30/ in exchange for what they receive reciprocally from them. It is
37 difficult to know the place where the Allouagues get them, for they say the gods they worship live among rocks with gushing springs and among inaccessible mountains. It is these gods who give the caracolis to the Allouagues in order to oblige them to bear more honor and reverence to their sovereignity. If these reports are true it might be that the devil abuses their weak, ignorant minds by this device. Whatever the truth may be, these caracolis are very rare among them and they bring them from the continent. There are various sizes of caracolis, but the most valued are not quite as large as the double size of a silver ecu coin. They are crescent shaped. They wear them from their neck embedded in wood.

30/ They wear bracelets of white beads as wide as the hand, not at the wrist but at the biceps near the shoulder. They also wear them on their legs in place of garters. They even make five or six double-linked bands of these white glass beads which they wear crossed over their shoulders and under their arms.

30 The hair style of the women is just like that of the men except
30 they don't stick feathers into it, and never wear feather crowns. They place in their hair very nice combs which give the appearance of a crest. They paint themselves with urucu like the men and also wear the same kind of bracelets, not at the biceps, but around the wrist. They wear necklaces of different minerals such as green stone, amber, crystal, and glass beads. I have seen some of them who wore necklaces around their necks weighing more than six pounds. When the women are to appear in the large assemblies they make belts braided from cotton threads and chains of white glass beads, from which they hang in different places small bunches of six or seven links of glass beads as long as the finger. They also wear a large number of small bells in order to make more noise when they dance.

30/ All the girls and women, except the slaves, wear a kind of legging from earliest childhood. These extend from ankle to calf. A second legging of four fingers width is worn between calf and knee. At the top of the lower legging they fasten a circular ornamentation, larger than a plate, woven of reed and cotton. A smaller one is worn on the lower legging edge. These two circular ornaments cause the calf to be so full that it looks like an Edam cheese between

two plates. These leggings are very much prized by the girls and [314] women because they are an infallible mark of their freedom; the slave women never wear them. Nevertheless, they are inconvenient and painful; when water gets these leggings tightens so much that the women sometimes weep because of the pain it causes them.

9. Carbets, Houses, Beds, Pirogues, and Canoes

Concerning the dwellings, the houses or habitations of the Caribs, each family forms a settlement. The father of the family has his house, where he lives with his unmarried children [the young unmarried men]. The wives and all their unmarried children [boys and young unmarried women] live in their own houses around that of the father. These houses have no ceiling under the roof and are separated into two or three rooms. One is used for eating, another for sleeping and to receive guests who wish to visit them. Some have a special room where they put all the cacomnes, that is to say, precious things like bows, arrows, clubs, axes, billhooks, and knives. They also add their hammocks and their small baskets, where they keep their mirrors, scissors, necklaces, and chains of glass beads—in a word all their ornaments.

The other utensils used for eating and drinking are kept in the kitchens. These consist of small earthenware jars; canaris, which are large jars used in making ollicou; and some other small vessels which they call coui. The coui are made of calabashes.

The rest of their furniture consists of small three-legged stools, carved from a single block of wood. They also use small tables with four wooden legs called matoutou, woven from latan [palm] leaves and reeds.

[341] Their gardens, where they plant provisions, are in the woods separated from the place where they ordinarily live. In the midst of the houses there is a large common house [men's house] which they call a carbet. The carbet is always sixty to eighty feet long. They are made by putting large posts eighteen to twenty feet high into the ground. The upper ends of these posts are forked, and they lay a latan [palm] or some other very straight tree on these forks. Upon

349 this they fasten rafters which slope to the ground, and these are covered with reeds or latan [palm] leaves. The result is that it is very dark in the carbet. Light enters only through the door, which is so low that one cannot enter without stooping. The boys are in charge of cleaning and sweeping the inside of the carbet, as well as the grounds around it. The girls and young women perform the same duties in smaller houses. The carbet is oval shaped. In one side
[778] there is a small special opening through which the Carib contend the devils enter when summoned by their boye. The devils are the only ones who use this entryway.

513 The Caribs have no use for beds but always use cotton hammocks which they carry everywhere with them. Those who do not have cotton hammocks sleep on cabanes. These are made of four sticks
294 interlaced with cords of mahot bark. The wives sometimes spend a full year making a hammock. When they have spun seven or eight pounds of thick cotton thread which is smooth and well twisted, they arrange it on a loom as though they were making cloth. Then they weave the threads as our weavers do, except that the cloth is doubled and each end is left with a good foot of unwoven threads. The cloth is ten to twelve feet long and six feet wide.

To make the cloth into a hammock they take ten or twelve fathoms of aloes fiber cord, a bit thicker than our small cordage of the type called fatt. Having bound together eight or ten of the loose threads at the end of the hammock, they fold this aloes cord into two-foot lengths, and then braid in eight or ten other loose threads. They make a fold in the fiber cord again and so forth until the end is reached. This being done they take another cord of aloes fiber as big as the finger, which is used to bind together all the folds of the first cord.

513 When they wish to sleep in it they tie the hammock with two big cords between large trees, or between two forks of the house supports. In tying, the hammocks are not taut but slack and bow-shaped. These hammocks are quite convenient and healthy because there is always fresh air. It is very pleasant to rest in one during the heat of the day in the cool shade under the trees. Almost all our Frenchmen use them, but chiefly those who are not married, for to sleep comfortably in a cotton hammock one should sleep alone.

513 When the hammocks are new they are as white as snow, but the
531 Caribs paint crude designs, in their fashion, with black paint which

513 never fades. Then they paint them with oil and urucu to protect them from rain. The Caribs always make a fire under their hammocks for they are very sensitive to cold. The fire also protects them from mosquitos, but chiefly the Caribs say the fire protects them from maboya—evil spirits.

501 The barbarians make two kinds of boats in which they go to sea.
396 Their boats are much different from our boats and sloops. We call the biggest of their boats pirogues and the Carib name for them is canoua. We call the smallest of their boats canoes which are called by them couliala. Both types are made from whole trees which they trim, dig out, and then complete with implements bought from Europeans such as axes, adzes, and other tools. Prior to the trade with Europeans they spent entire years making them. They felled trees or burned them at the base, hollowing them out with stone axes and with a small fire which progressed a little at a time all along the pirogue until it had made the desired shape.

The pirogues seem to be nothing more than two large planks joined together at the base and six or seven feet wide between gunwales. At both extremities are pieces of planks, especially on the poop, because the pirogues are almost always a little bit higher there than in the front.

Ordinarily the pirogues are not high enough with just these first side planks, and they build up the sides from one end to the other with planks fifteen to sixteen inches wide. Without using nails they lash and fit these planks upon the pirogue with twine made from mahot. Next they caulk the joints with oakum made from the beaten bark of mahot. Over this caulking they bind small sticks with mahot twine. This is indeed very watertight, but it is not permanent and must be done over again and again.

On both sides of the pirogue they lash long poles, inside, half a foot below the gunwales. At two-foot intervals they lash thwarts which rest upon these two poles, and these are used as benches when they paddle.

501 The pirogues are usually forty feet long and seven to eight feet wide. The rudder is only a plank set without iron or nails into another piece of wood. The pirogues sometimes carry fifty people together with all their luggage. They use both sails and paddles.

501 Their paddles have a handle like that of a spade, i.e., with a small piece of wood across the end. This is held in one hand while the other hand grasps the paddle near the blade which is two and one half [543] feet long. They paddle differently from the way we row, for they face the front, pushing the water behind to drive the pirogue ahead. They sometimes go 200 to 300 leagues in fairly bad weather and when they have arrived the only anchor they have is a stone between four sticks. Their only cable is made of mahot fiber.

The coulialas, which we call canoes, never exceed twenty feet in length and three to four feet in width. They are pointed at both ends making it difficult to distinguish bow from stem. They seldom build up the sides with planking. They paddle these in the same way as they paddle pirogues.

There are many kinds of canoes. Some are so small that they can only carry one man and are used only for fishing. They sometimes use rafts such as were described in the first part of this book. They 502 have no compasses, magnets, or sundials, and therefore do not go too far from land. When they lose sight of land they steer at night by the stars, and by day by the course of the sun.

The one who assumes the responsibility for a trip is called a captain, and he commands the pirogue. He gives orders for everything necessary for the embarkation, although he is not more highly considered by the others because of his role.

484 When they land someplace other than their own settlement, they build small roofs or porches which they call ajoupa. They cover them with latan or wild plantain leaves and hang their beds beneath them.

10. Warfare and Weapons

701 The Caribs have three kinds of captains who command them. The first are masters of canoes or pirogues. The second have settlements of their own. The third kind of captain is elected by common consent, either because he has shown great courage in war or because he has killed many of their enemies. They never elect young men, even if they are sons of captains, for they fear that young men have had too little experience and are too impetuous, which would endanger

[70] everyone. They choose old men. These men are as much esteemed for the maturity of their counsel as they are for their extended knowledge of warfare. The old men resign when they realize that they are no longer capable of supporting the burden of their tasks and find it troublesome to undertake the long voyages which are part of their duties. By this resignation they acquire as much honor through frankly confessing their weakness as they would gain through a victory. In order that the respect due them will not be lessened by having too many captains, there is sometimes only one on an island. In Dominica there are two of these captains, who are separated by a great distance for fear that their authority would clash and that their jealousy would degrade them. Their power is limited because they only command in military affairs.

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In referring to these captains, Mr. de Rochefort calls them quite improperly generals and admirals, and sometimes even caciques. Neither the Caribs nor most of the French have heard of this latter name.

[71] The Caribs have long waged war against certain nations of Europe which I have sufficiently described in the first part of this book. In addition they wage war against the savages in South America, particularly against the Allouagues. The Carib war captains have experience in everything concerning military affairs and have in addition given ample proof of their bravery and courage. They arouse the men to take up arms and set out on a campaign whenever it pleases them. Everyone obeys them in affairs which concern war, but outside of this they are given no consideration.

When one of their captains intends to go to war he holds a drinking party or a general assembly at his settlement. Here the guests enjoy themselves thoroughly with much dancing, in their fashion, and drinking until they almost burst. The old women, drunk as they are, begin to recall the purpose of the assembly, and start out by recounting outrages and wrongs presumably done to them by the enemy. One mourns the loss of her dead husband, another says they ate her father, a mother complains about her son, and a sister about her brother. In brief they give a recital of disordered complaints so extreme that they move the whole assembly to tears, each exciting the other to take vengeance upon their enemies. Then the captain who

721 has planned the war shouts for silence and the uproar ceases. He makes his speech, standing before the assembly, but in a language so removed from the ordinary talk among them that the women and children understand nothing at all.

In this harangue he describes their massacred fathers, their slaughtered brothers, and their enslaved children. Next he highly praises all of them on their prowess in war. Then he fashions a great narrative about all the victories they have gained over their enemies —victories often more imagined than real. He exhorts them to trust in his valor and to fight boldly. Everyone applauds his speech, delivered with such fervor that in their minds the last of their enemies is already in oblivion. In conclusion, he designates the day of departure and place of meeting. All the captains who will command the pirogues immediately give orders to assemble provisions and military supplies, and all the women work to make flour for the expedition. The latter they enclose neatly in leaves of wild plantains, so that water will not penetrate.

When a captain does not /wish to/ call an assembly, he designates one of his most prominent men to visit the settlements. This deputy, having visited a master of a carbet, speaks to him for a good half hour. After this tiresome discourse the master of the carbet answers with as much verbosity as the deputy, and approves or disapproves of the plan for war. He goes to war if it seems good to him, for no one is able to force him. If he is wholly persuaded, either by necessity or by the usefulness of the enterprise, he promises to present himself at the appointed place on the day designated for departure.

4/1 Meanwhile the warriors who will be going on the campaigns supply themselves with boutou. This is a kind of club made of green Brazil wood or some other dense wood, heavy as lead. This club has a length of about three feet and is as wide as the hand, except that the end is slightly wider. It is flat and about one inch thick, and is engraved in the Carib manner. They fill the engraving with white paint made with mouchache, which is the fine flour of manioc. Although these boutou are not too easily handled, they could fell an ox with a single blow. These clubs are large or small according to the men who carry them.

They make a great collection of arrows which they have been preparing for a long time. These arrows are made of the seed-bearing

[47] tube which grows at the top of a reed. This tube is as thick as the little finger, four feet long, smooth and without joints, yellow as gold, and as light as a feather. At the large end of the tube they fit a point of green wood, or any other kind of strong, heavy wood instead of using iron. With knives they carve many small barbs in this wooden point in order that the would inflicted will be enlarged in removing the arrow. The tip of the arrow is poisoned with manchineel sap. All the wounds are deadly even when they are only at the finger tip. They also attach to some of their arrows certain fish bones as long as the hand which are found above the tail of a kind of ray, common in the Indies. This fish bone carried in own venom which is as dangerous as the manufactured variety. Some of these arrows are feathered at the end like ours. They use parrot feathers for this purpose. Their bows which are very similar to ours are made of woods such as Brazil, palmetto, and beechwood. They sometimes carry javelins made of Brazil or beechwood, which are like halfpikes with a point at the end made from the same wood. They throw these very skillfully.

[72] When all is ready, the war leader holds a second drinking party or assembly, in the course of which he again decides their destination, as well as their formation in combat. They consult the devil in this assembly by means of a hoye and question him about the success of the campaign, and after hearing what he tells them, which even in the opinion of the barbarians is often untrue, they finish their odious drinking. All of them leave drunk, bringing with them on the expedition only enough women to serve, comb, paint them with urucu, and cook for them.

[73] When they reach the outskirts of enemy territory they do not attack carelessly, but hide themselves along some river or on some deserted island, where their enemies do not usually go. Then they send out spies into enemy territory to observe carefully their movements and determine the most suitable time for surprise. They attack their enemy only when he is unaware of them. If they are discovered while they are laying their cowardly ambushes, and so realize that the enemy is preparing himself for defense, then the war is ended. Without ceremony they fold up their baggage and return home. They are so cowardly that if they knew absolutely that one of them would

726 die in combat, they would never go to war.

If they happen upon some of their enemies going down to the sea to fish in their canoes, they let them pass. When the enemies are unable to escape, they rush them yelling and bellowing like enraged bulls. The enemies are seized, tied, and bound so thoroughly that they cannot escape. With this inglorious conquest they return filled with more pride than if they had achieved great feats and won the most glorious victory in the world.

If this [kind of] opportunity does not occur, [then] they learn from their spies where the most isolated carbets are located, because these are easier to surprise and are the weakest. These are the ones they attack. When they have decided to attack a carbet they usually wait, I do not know why, for a full moon. Just before dawn they surround the carbet. Although the carbet does not contain more than 50 to 60 men to defend it, and although they are not less than 1,000 to 1,500 attackers, they do all they can to surprise them in their beds, which fairly often happens. But if they are noticed and if the others make a vigorous defense, they besiege the place. They let loose so many arrows that the gardens around are filled and strewn with arrows.

If their enemies resist overly much they try to burn them in their carbet. For this purpose they attach some carded cotton as big as a fist to an arrow, set fire to it, and shoot it at the roof of the carbet. This roof is made of reeds, latan [palm], palmetto or leaves which are combustible and burn easily. If this arrow does not have the desired effect they shoot so many that eventually the carbet catches fire. The defenders allow themselves to burn rather than fall to the mercy of the cannibals.

If they defend themselves courageously until dawn, then when the sun rises the courage of the Caribs weakens, and the siege never lasts beyond midday. Should they lose men in the fighting, they would [727] never leave their dead and wounded at the disposal of their enemies, even if most of them should die trying to retrieve them.

If they have to fight in battle ranks (which rarely happens, and this always against their intentions), they divide themselves into three bands, without, however, observing rank and file or any other formation of a battalion. Before shooting the first arrow they make terrible, frightening yells in order to strike terror into the hearts of

726 their enemies. They renew these cries from time to time during the fighting. If the enemy gives ground their confidence swells and they are lions in courage, but if one resists courageously they lose heart and take to their heels, selling their lives cheaply.

727 Having won a victory they pillage everything in the houses, each man seizing whatever booty he can, which then belongs to him alone. They never seize the enemy's territory. Their wars have no other purpose than to exterminate their enemies in revenge for the wrongs they believe they have received. They take both men and women prisoners and assign the men to death without mercy and the women to slavery. The slave women quite often marry the victors but they are not allowed to wear the big and small leggings worn by the other Carib women. They are obliged to wear their hair short as a mark of servitude.

727 When there are enemy dead on the ground they are barbecued,
266 that is to say roasted until they are dry, and then eaten immediately. The male captives are brought home in triumph. They are starved and a general assembly is held, the captives being displayed tied up tightly. Now they give them a thousand insults and make a thousand boasts pretending that at any time they will smash their heads with clubs. The miserable and unfortunate victims ordinarily endure all of this with a calm and unmoved face, without showing surprise in any way. The prisoners even defy their captors by boasting loudly that they have eaten the fathers of the conquerors, and tell them that they /the conquerors/ will be eating their own fathers when they eat the prisoners. They add that their own relatives and friends will know how to revenge their death.

Finally the oldest gives one of the prisoners a club blow and the others are likewise killed. Now they cease the thousand cruelties which they had been carrying out. But this does not please their wives who wish the captives to endure all conceivable torments.

266 After the prisoners are killed the captors dismember them, cutting up the meat with knives and the bones with billhooks. They throw the limbs on a large barbecue over a blazing fire. The barbecue had been pointed out to the victims in order to frighten them half to death with this terrifying spectacle before they were clubbed. After this good meat is cooked the bravest roast the heart and eat it. The

266 women's share is the legs and thighs. The others eat the other parts indifferently. The meat is eaten with fury rather than with pleasure, through revenge rather than to feed themselves. They do not enjoy its taste, for most of them become sick after this terrible meal. It is a fantastic and amazing sight to see the madness or more exactly fury of the women while eating the flesh of their enemies. They chew it, chew it again, tighten it between their teeth and are so afraid to lose a morsel that they lick the grill sticks on which some spots of grease have fallen.

When everyone in the assembly has eaten the meat, each one carries some home with him to eat at another time. While I was in Martinique I saw a Carib carry a roasted leg into a house, the leg being as dry and hard as wood. He invited each one to join him. He said that those who had eaten some Allouague—for this is what he called his cooked meat—would become very courageous. Among the Caribs those who have eaten the most are the most respected.

The Caribs have tasted men from every nation that has visited them. I have heard them say several times that among all the Christians, the French were the best and the most delicate, in contrast to the Spaniards who were so tough that the Caribs had difficulty eating them. A little time prior to the occupation of St. Kitts by the French, the Caribs raided Puerto Rico. Among their other crimes they killed and roasted one of our missionaries. After eating him most of them died, the survivors afterwards being afflicted with a very great sickness. Several of the Carib survivors stated they had not eaten a morsel of him, but had left him roasted on the grill without being able to touch him. I think they only say this, for the simplest among them natively confess that they devoured him. Since that time they have not eaten any more Christians, contenting themselves with killing them and abandoning them where they fall.

627 Individual feuds result in duels with clubs. A single well struck blow sends a man to the next world. The killer must leave the country or expose himself to as many fights as the dead man has relatives, unless by means of many presents he is able to soften their anger. He can never feel safe, however, for at the first drinking party or assembly, one of the dead man's relatives may treacherously kill him with a club blow on the head.

627 I heard it was said to Mr. de Parquet that two Caribs were fighting a duel, shooting arrows at each other. During the time it takes to say the 51st Psalm, they were in continual movement, and to avoid each other's arrows they remained at a distance from each other. When they were forced to separate it was found that they had done no harm to one other.

Enough has now been said concerning warfare among the Caribs.

11. Disease, Death, and Funerals

164 There is no rule so general that it allows no exception. In the first part of this chapter I described the robust physical condition of the Caribs. It should not be inferred from these remarks that European diseases are rare among them. More precisely, it should be said that the Caribs suffer from these diseases less frequently than we do in Europe. This is fortunate for them, for if they recover from their diseases this is due more to the powerful efforts of nature than to the remedies and treatment they receive.

167 It is certain that they have very excellent remedies. But if a remedy is very successful for one disease they may use if for all other sicknesses; they do not know the causes of sickness nor the qualities of their herbs, which often do them more harm than good. As far as good treatment is concerned, they do not know what it is to coddle the sick, and even those who are about to die are fed as if they were completely well. They especially fear smallpox because they have no treatment for it, and it often ravages them in the same way that the plague does in Europe. Very few among them bear its scars because most of them die of it. In the wet season they suffer from fevers which they cure by an external remedy; on the wrist and forehead they place some cachima [cachimilla?] leaves and other herbs crushed together. They also use a shred of pimento, as we have said, which they rub and pass over the eyes to make the fever pass away. They are also tormented at all times of the year by an eye sickness which I shall describe in my next chapter, because the French are also afflicted by it. This disease is communicable not only from family to family but even from island to island.

757 Although the Caribs have few remedies for this affliction, they have excellent ones for white specks or cataracts on the eyes.

Mr. du Parquet was threatened by an unfortunate blindness caused by two great cataracts which blocked his vision. As he was on the point of leaving for France to get treatment, an old Carib called Pilot promised that he would have his wives cure Mr. du Parquet if he would visit his carbet. Mr. du Parquet had himself carried there and Pilot's wives washed his eyes with cotton dipped into the juice of certain herbs. Then they wiped his eyes with their tongues, and five or six days later the largest speck fell off and a little time later the other did the same.

They are little tormented by most of the diseases we have in Europe. The shameful disease called by them epian, which is really great pox in its highest degree of malignancy, rarely leaves them. Nevertheless, they say they can cure it easily with the sap of a tree which they use as a liquid medicine. They also blacken their bodies with Genipa juice and burned seeds. Actually they do not cure but only arrest the disease. Even some children are born with it, and die from its effects. It is believed that the disorder of their debauches contribute to this disease, but to a greater extent their food is held responsible, which is only fish, too fresh and half cooked. In addition the lizards which they eat have the malignant quality of renewing the disease in those who have been cured of it.

They bleed themselves by making slight scratches with an agouti tooth, but so little blood oozes out that when a man has his entire body scratched in this way it would not more than fill one of our standard bleeding cups. They are subject to certain boils which appear on their buttocks and around their thighs. These are ordinarily only manifestations of great pox. Father Raymond [Breton] says they pierced these boils with the fishbones from the tail of a ray, which seems very strange to me since the stings of these fishbones are almost incurable. When a disease has left them they purge themselves, but this often does more harm than good.

Women know the qualities of plants and all related things better than do the men. They use herbs quite well. When the natural [755] powers of these medicines fail, they have recourse to their boye, who in turn consults his devil, who cures or pronounces the sentence of death, as I have already said.

758 As soon as they have fallen sick their spouses and near relatives leave them and visit them no more. They say their reason is that in their own bodies there is an essence which is not only capable of harming and worsening the sick man's condition, but could also cause his death. Many do not visit the sick for this reason, although they do not lack sympathy toward some one of their friends or relatives who is sick. Their sympathies are not by nature perverted.

Once Father Raymond [Breton] asked a young Carib boy why he did not visit his sick father who was on the verge of death. The poor boy signed and shed a stream of tears which showed the extent to which his heart was moved by compassion for the plight of his father, and also showed that it was impossible for him to think about it without being affected. Yet he could not visit his father, who was in such a miserable condition, because then he [the father] would die immediately. In this respect we are made aware that they are not such barbarians as one imagines.

761 Father Raymond [Breton] says that he has seen some of the most vicious among them dying with dreadful anxiety as a result of apprehension and doubt over what should become of their souls after their death. No one among them could provide solace to these persons.

764 As soon as a person dies the women wash the body, clean it, and paint it with urucu from head to toe. The hair is greased with palmetto oil and is combed and tied. The deceased is arranged as neatly as he might appear in a solemn assembly. Then the women wrap him in a cotton hammock which has never been used. The grave is dug for burial in the very house in which he died, or else a house is especially built for him. They never bury their dead in an unprotected place, and they never omit these ceremonial practices —no matter where the place of death occurs.

Once a Carib captain of Dominica with his family of thirty to thirty-five people was bringing us one of his sick children to have him baptized before his death. However, the child died two leagues from our convent, and the group arrived greatly saddened, showing much regret over the fact that he had died before receiving baptism. With great insistence they asked us to give them a small abandoned house which we owned, located in a garden on the seashore. It was to be used as a sepulcher for their child. We willingly gave it to

764 them. They busied themselves reconditioning the house so thoroughly that it appeared new. They buried this child with the following ceremonies: In the midst of the house they dug a round hole three to four feet deep in which they placed the neatly prepared child. He was wrapped in his cotton hammock in the following position: he was sitting up on his heals, both elbows on his knees, with his head supported by the palms of his hands. The women surrounded the grave, taking the same position as the child, and began to make strange sighs. Immediately after they began a chant, very sad and full of laments. This song was intermingled with sighs and often with loud screams during which they raised their eyes to the sky. They shed such a quantity of tears that they would have compelled the most stout-hearted individuals to weep with them. Their husbands were sitting behind them, weeping like the women, but solaced their wives by embracing them with one hand and rubbing their arm occasionally with the other. One man covered the hole with a piece of plank and the women threw some earth on it from time to time. After this ceremony, which lasted a good hour, the women burned on the grave all of the child's possessions—consisting of certain small baskets, spun cotton, and some small trinkets.

764 [365] When the head of the family dies his wives and children cut their hair, wearing it as short as the slaves do, for one full year. They fast for the period of one moon on bread and water. It is not because they believe these actions are useful to the deceased, but rather they say, if they did not fast at the death of one of their relatives their own eyesight would weaken, they would become infirm, and would fall into the hands of their enemies. If the deceased owned slaves his relatives kill them unless they have already fled, in which case they are not pursued.

Relatives who cannot be present at the funeral come afterwards to visit the grave. They are obliged to weep like the others, although very often they don't feel like it. They sometimes spend a good quarter of an hour sighing, lamenting, and grimacing, before they shed tears. But when they are weeping no one can stop them.